

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
ACDA-07 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 /066 W
-----171032Z 075819 /21

R 170900Z FEB 77
FM AMCONSUL MUNICH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8105
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMNR SHAPE
USAREUR HEIDELBERG
USAFE RAMSTEIN

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PARM, MARR, XG, NATO, US
SUBJECT: "WEHRKUNDE" CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS TAKE SOMBER
VIEW OF SOVIET BUILDUP

1. SUMMARY: VIRTUALLY ALL PARTICIPANTS IN PRESTIGIOUS ANNUAL

"WEHRKUNDE" CONFERENCE HELD HERE FEBRUARY 12-13 AGREED THAT CONTINUING MASSIVE SOVIET NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL ARMS BUILDUP IN EUROPE PRESENTED INCREASING THREAT TO NATO, ESPECIALLY ON POLITICAL FRONT. THERE WAS ALSO CONSENSUS (EXCEPT FOR FRENCH PARTICIPANTS) THAT WEST SHOULD RESPOND TO SOVIET CHALLENGE BY EMPHASIZING STANDARDIZATION AND INTER-OPERABILITY AS WELL AS WEST'S TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY. ALL PARTICIPANTS CONSIDERED IT IMPERATIVE THAT U.S. MAINTAIN ROUGH STRATEGIC EQUIVALENCE TO USSR. WITH EXCEPTION OF FEW PARTICIPANTS SUCH AS U.S. SENATOR TOWER AND FRG BUNDESTAG DEPUTY WOERNER, NO RPT NO ONE REALLY CALLED FOR MEANINGFUL INCREASE IN WESTERN DEFENSE EFFORTS. A NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS CALLED FOR TIGHTER WESTERN POLICIES TOWARD EAST ON TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER. END SUMMARY.

2. PARTICIPANTS: THE 100-ODD PARTICIPANTS IN 14TH ANNUAL WEHRKUNDE (DEFENSE SCIENCE CONFERENCE) INCLUDED GOVERNMENT LEADERS SUCH AS UK MINDEF MULLEY, SPANISH DEPUTY PRIMIN GUTIERREZ MELLADO, PORTUGUESE FONMIN DE MEDEIROS FERREIRA, AND FRG MINDEF LEBER, U.S., UK AND FRG PARLIAMENTARIANS SUCH AS SENATOR TOWER, REPS. STRATTON AND SOLARZ, DIPLOMATS, MOD OFFICIALS AND GENERALS FROM NATO HEADQUARTERS AND NATO CAPITALS, AND JOURNALISTS, SUCH AS CY SULZBERGER OF N.Y. "TIMES." CONFERENCE THEME WAS "DEVELOPMENT POSSIBILITIES OF ALLIANCE."

3. PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS: FIVE MAJOR PAPERS WERE PRESENTED AND AUTHOR OF EACH PAPER GAVE VERBAL PRESENTATION OF HIS MAIN THESIS. PRESENTATIONS, WHICH WERE FOLLOWED

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BY OPEN DISCUSSION, ARE SUMMARIZED BELOW:

A. CDU SECRETARY GENERAL KURT BIEDENKOPF:

ASSESSMENT: IDEOLOGICAL/POLITICAL BASIS FOR EAST-WEST "DETENTE" HAS BEEN SOVIET CONCEPT OF "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE." DETENTE HAS SERVED SOVIET INTERESTS ON PSYCHOLOGICAL (INCREASED INTERNATIONAL TRADE, GROWING WESTERN CONFIDENCE IN PEACEFUL INTENTIONS OF USSR) AND MILITARY FRONTS. (EAST TOO IS PAYING PRICE FOR DETENTE POLICY AS PEOPLES LIVING UNDER DICTATORSHIPS FOR DECADES ARE INSISTING ON RIGHTS SET FORTH IN HELSINKI FINAL ACT.) DETENTE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO WEAKENING OF WEST'S MILITARY PREPAREDNESS AND HAS "PARALYZED" WEST IN IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT. THERE IS, MOREOVER, DANGER THAT USSR MAY TRY TO COMPENSATE FOR EAST'S INTERNAL INSTABILITY WITH INCREASINGLY AGGRESSIVE EXTERNAL BEHAVIOR.

PROGRAM:

--INCREASE ALLIANCE'S DEFENSE PREPAREDNESS AND READINESS
POSTURE, EMPHASIZING IMPROVED TECHNOLOGY;

--STRENGTHEN IDEOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL DEFENSE OF WESTERN
PEOPLES;

--SECURE "SOCIAL PEACE" IN WESTERN EUROPE.

B. FRG MINDEF LEBER:

ASSESSMENT: STRENGTHENING OF WESTERN ECONOMIES
IS CRUCIAL IF MORE IS TO BE DONE ON DEFENSE FRONT. WEST
SHOULD HAVE ULTRA MODERN ANTI-TANK DEFENSE RATHER THAN
ATTEMPT TO MATCH EAST UNIT FOR UNIT. USSR SHOULD NOT
BE ASTONISHED IF MORE AND MORE PEOPLE SUSPECT IT OF
OFFENSIVE INTENTIONS.

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PROGRAM:

--EXPLOIT RESERVISTS MORE EXTENSIVELY;

--IMPROVE REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES;

--ENSURE SUFFICIENT LEVEL OF WEAPONS AND AMMO AS WELL
AS ADEQUATE STOCKPILES;

--CONTINUE EFFORTS TOWARD STANDARDIZATION AND INTEROPERABILITY,
EMPHASIZING STANDARDIZED METHODS OF REFUELING.

C. ROBERT ELLSWORTH (FORMERLY DOD):

ASSESSMENT: UNDER METAPHOR OF "SEVERAL HOURS
STRIKING SIMULTANEOUSLY ON CLOCK OF HISTORY." INDIVIDUAL

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HOURS STRIKING INCLUDED: SOVIET NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL BUILDUP IN EUROPE; GROWING GLOBAL ROLE OF SOVIETS AS THEIR BLUE-WATER NAVAL CAPABILITIES INCREASE; INCREASED SIGNIFICANCE OF NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONSHIPS, PARTICULARLY NATO DEPENDENCE ON PERSIAN GULF OIL. NATO PRESENTLY HAS "ROUGH EQUIVALENCE" WITH WARSAW PACT IN OVERALL MILITARY BALANCE BUT MOMENTUM OF SOVIET BUILDUP "PORTENDS OMINOUS FUTURE UNLESS PRESENT TRENDS REVERSED."

PROGRAM:--DEVELOP BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW SOVIETS MIGHT EXPLOIT NUCLEAR PARITY IN CONVENTIONAL CONFLICT;

--BE PREPARED FOR LIKELIHOOD OF INCREASING SOVIET CHALLENGE TO ALLIANCE'S POSITIONS OUTSIDE EUROPE;

--GET SOLID NEW TECHNOLOGIES INTO PRODUCTION.

D. UK MINDEF MULLEY:

ASSESSMENT: WEST'S TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE IS BEING RAPIDLY ERODED. KEY PROBLEM IS HOW TO ASSESS INTENTIONS OF USSR AND ITS ALLIES IN EUROPE.

PROGRAM:

--WEST SHOULD NOT REACH WEAPON FOR WEAPON BUT PERSEVERE IN EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE MILITARY BALANCE AT REDUCED LEVELS;

--MAINTENANCE OF WEST'S ECONOMIC STRENGTH AND SOCIAL HEALTH;

--NATO SHOULD FORCUS ITS EFFORTS ON CONVENTIONAL ELEMENTS OF TRIAD;
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--MEPHASIZE INTEROPERABILITY.

2. PROF. JACQUES VERNANT, FRENCH INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN POLITICAL STUDIES:

ASSESSMENT: NATO HAS PROVED ITS STRENGTH AND DONE ITS JOB FOR OVER QUARTER CENTURY. SPAIN CANNOT BE LEFT OUTSIDE EUROPEAN ALLIANCE SYSTEM. ALLIED COUNTRIES IN WHICH COMMUNISTS PARTICPATE IN THE GOVERNMENT MAY REACT TO CRISES DIFFERENTLY THAN ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE. PERHPAS "NEW MILITARY PERILS WHICH, ACCORDING TO SOME CIRCLES ALLIANCE NOW FACES ARE REALL SECONDARY" AND ELEMENTS OF CHANGE WHICH COULD AFFECT WEST MOST DEEPLY ARE INTERNAL SOCIAL/POLITICAL CHANGES I SOME MEMBER COUNTRIES.

4. KOREA: SEVERAL PARTICIPANTS CRITICIZED STATED U.S. INTENTION TO WITHDRAW ALL ITS GROUND FORCES FROM KOREA. BRITISH MP GEOFFREY RIPPON SAID SUCH A WITHDRAWAL WOULD REPRESENT "ANOTHER RETREAT FROM POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY," AND OTHER SPEAKERS CLAIMED THIS COULD HAVE DESTABILIZING INFLUENCE ON WESTERN DEFENSE AS WHOLE.

5. NATO AND TURKEY: CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ DESCRIBED NATO'S

SOUTHERN FLANK IN "STATE OF ADVANCED DISINTEGRATION."
HE POINTED TO INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN GRAVITY OF SITUATION
FACING NATO AND POSSIBILITY THAT CONGRESS MIGHT CLOSE
DOOR IN FACE OF VALUABLE ALLY.

6. CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S SECURITY POLICY: SENATOR
TOWER VOICED BELIEF THAT U.S. SECURITY POLICY WILL BE
ESSENTIALLY SAME AS IT HAS BEEN. PARTICIPANTS SHOULD NOT
JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS ABOUT U.S. POLICY ON BASIS OF ISOLATED
REMARKS BY A FEW OFFICIALS.

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7. WESTERN WILLPOWER STRESSED: SENATOR TOWER, FRG
BUNDESTAG DEPUTY AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND
SEVERAL OTHERS NOTED WEST'S TECHNOLOGICAL STRENGTH AND
SUPERIOR HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES AND CALLED ON WEST
TO DEMONSTRATE WILL TO MAKE GREATER DEFENSE EFFORT.

8. SULZBERGER'S SUMMARY: ARTICULATING THE VIEWS OF
THE MORE PESSIMISTIC PARTICIPANTS, VETERAN N.Y. "TIMES"
CORRESPONDENT SULZBERGER SAID HE FELT HE HAD BEEN
ATTENDING "AN UNUSUALLY AGREEABLE AND ONLY SLIGHTLY
PREMATURE WAKE." IF ANYONE AT CONFERENCE HAD PROGRAM
FOR DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT OF WEST'S STRENGTH, SAID
SULZBERGER, IT HAD ESCAPED HIM.

9. TEXTS OF PAPERS AND LIST OF PARTICIPANTS BEING POUCHED
DEPARTMENT AND BONN.BETTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, MILITARY BUILDUP, MILITARY CAPABILITIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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TAGS: PFOR, PARM, MARR, XG, US, UR, NATO
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